

REMARKS

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1-18 are currently being prosecuted. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider his restriction requirement in view of the amendments and remarks as set forth hereinbelow.

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

At the outset, it is respectfully submitted that the present application entered into the national phase before the USPTO based on a PCT application. Thus, the rules that apply to the present application with regard to unity of invention are set forth in 37 CFR §§ 1.475 to 1.477.

As set forth in 37 CFR § 1.475(a), an international and a national stage application shall relate to one invention only or to a group of inventions so linked as to form a single general inventive concept. On July 6, 2004, the Examiner was provided with a copy of the International Search Report. In this report, the International Bureau maintained all of the claims in a single application based on the fact that the claims were so linked as to form a single general inventive concept.

It is respectfully submitted that the present application does include claims that are so linked as to form a single general inventive concept as set forth in PCT Rule 13.1. The Examiner contends that there is a lack of unity of invention stating that a single allowable generic concept has yet to be determined. It is respectfully submitted that this contention is not believed to be tenable in view of the fact that this is not a proper reason for an election of species. The claims are linked to be directed to one invention relating to a lock and key arrangement. The fact that the claims are linked was confirmed in the International Search Report wherein all of the claims were maintained in a single application. Thus, claims 1-18 should be considered in a single application. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider his election of species requirement.

ELECTION OF SPECIES REQUIREMENT

The Examiner has set forth a restriction requirement with regard to claims 1-18. The grouping of the claims is set forth as follows:

<u>GROUP</u>	<u>FIGURES</u>	<u>CLAIMS</u>
I	1-5	1-7, 9-14, 16 and 17 (all generic claims)
II	6a and 6b	8 and 15
III	7 and 10	
IV	8 and 9	
V	11-13	18

VI 14-16

It is respectfully submitted that claims 1-7, 9-14, 16 and 17 are generic to the six species identified above. Applicant has elected the species of Group I for initial examination. It is respectfully submitted that the Examiner should review claims 1-7, 9-14, 16 and 17.

The provisions of 37 CFR 1.146 state that a reasonable number of species are permitted in a single application. The present application contains six species. It is respectfully submitted that the Examiner's election of species requirement is improper in view of the fact that a reasonable number of species are set forth in the present application.

In order to be responsive to the Examiner's election of species requirement, claims 1-7, 9-14, 16 and 17 have been initially elected. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider his election of species requirement and act on all of the claims in the present application. If the Examiner does persist in his election of species requirement, Applicant reserves the right to file divisional applications directed to the non-elected claims at a later date if they so desire.

DRAWINGS

The Examiner is respectfully requested to approve the correction to Fig. 12 of the Formal Drawings that was submitted by the Applicant on January 19, 2006. The Formal Drawings comply with the requirements of the USPTO. No further action is required from

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the Applicant at this time.

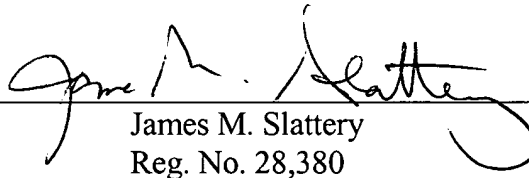
Favorable action on the present application is earnestly solicited.

Pursuant to the provisions of 37 CFR 1.17 and 1.136(a), Applicant respectfully petitions for a one (1) month extension of time for filing a response in connection with the present application. The required fee of \$120.00 is attached hereto.

Please charge any fees or credit any overpayment pursuant to 37 CFR 1.16 or 1.17 to Deposit Account No. 02-2448.

Respectfully submitted,

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